

Important Advances in Clinical Medicine

Epitomes of Progress— General and Family Practice

The Scientific Board of the California Medical Association presents the following inventory of items of progress in General and Family Practice. Each item, in the judgment of a panel of knowledgeable physicians, has recently become reasonably firmly established, both as to scientific fact and important clinical significance. The items are presented in simple epitome and an authoritative reference, both to the item itself and to the subject as a whole, is generally given for those who may be unfamiliar with a particular item. The purpose is to assist the busy practitioner, student, research worker or scholar to stay abreast of these items of progress in General and Family Practice which have recently achieved a substantial degree of authoritative acceptance, whether in his own field of special interest or another.

The items of progress listed below were selected by the Advisory Panel to the Section on General and Family Practice of the California Medical Association and the summaries were prepared under its direction.

Reprint requests to: Division of Scientific and Educational Activities,
California Medical Association, 731 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94103

Newer Techniques of Treatment of Sexual Dysfunction

TODAY'S RAPIDLY CHANGING SEXUAL MORES may often bring patients to their family physician with questions about their sexuality.

Sex counseling clinics based on the concepts of Masters and Johnson are able to handle only a few hundred couples each year. Few physicians have been exposed to any formal courses in sex education. As such, sexual maladjustment may be a frequent cause of anxiety and depression and the physician should not be uncomfortable in discussing any form of sexual expression. To be an effective therapist requires being at ease and having some knowledge of the problem. The physician should not depend on his own experience and "hang-ups." Because there are not enough sex counselors, the family physician will be called

upon increasingly for help. Some familiarity with counseling techniques, starting with the interview of both partners, is essential. To prepare for the role, courses offered by medical schools on the restructuring of sexual attitudes can be very helpful.

There is a wide range of therapy for such problems of sexual dysfunction as impotence, premature ejaculation or orgasmic failure aside from the traditional approach of long-term psychotherapy. A new approach is "pair therapy" following the methods of Masters and Johnson.

RAYMOND C. ANDERSON, MD

REFERENCES

- Hartman WE, Fithian MA: Treatment of Sexual Dysfunction. Bulletin of the Long Beach Center for Marital and Sexual Studies, Long Beach, 1972
- Semans JH: Premature ejaculation: A new approach. South Med J 49:148-151, Apr 1956
- Masters WH, Johnson VE: Human Sexual Inadequacy. Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1970